

make compensation to the owner, and did so with great propriety. That was not the case of a State, as in Maryland, first legalizing the institution, and at a subsequent day abolishing it. Slavery came into the District of Columbia, *not* by the act of the General Government, but under the authority of the two States of Maryland and Virginia, who ceded that district to the United States, and when the latter accepted that District, they took it with the institution so created, and there was an eminent propriety, if not a legal obligation upon the Government, when it undertook to put an end to an institution thus derived, to pay those who might suffer by its destruction.

But no such obligation rests upon this State. Slavery here exists only by her toleration, and to hold that she can never revoke that permission and prohibit the institution without paying for it by public assessment, would, as it seems to me, equally authorize those who, a few years ago, were making fortunes among us by pursuit of the lottery business, to insist that we had no right to prohibit that business by State Legislation, unless we first paid those who were under the previous laws of the State thus legitimately engaged therein.

These are my views upon the question of compensation; in favor of compensation by the General Government, but decidedly and determinedly opposed to compensation by the State.

My friend from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) quoted the other night from certain resolutions adopted by the last Legislature of Maryland, or the Legislature before the last, and said that he had not changed from that principle. If he will go further back he will find that when I was in the Legislature of Maryland in 1858, my record is clear there; that when the movement was made to call a Convention of the people, I was in favor of the call of that Convention. And when my friend from Prince George's (Mr. Belt) introduced into that bill the provision that the Convention should not by any act disturb the relation betwixt master and slave, my name being called first to that proposition, I said—no. I said “no” for two reasons. I did not believe the Legislature had the right to instruct a Convention of the people; and I was then in favor of emancipation. I saw further back than that, that this question of slavery was not only going to make trouble, but unless we were very careful, would bring ruin. Upon its very verge we are now toppling.

At the election of 1861, the people of my county again honored me as one of her delegates. I repeated what I had done in 1858. At that time were also unsuccessful. The bill came from the Senate chamber, and although our committee in the House took a long time to consider it, which was no fault

of mine, for I was not on the committee, it went back to the Senate with the provision, “that the Convention should not by any act disturb the relation of master and slave” stricken out, and I think, to my friend from Calvert (Mr. Briscoe,) is due the credit of defeating it there, by amendments which consumed the time up to the hour of adjournment.

Mr. BRISCOE. I offered no amendments.

Mr. BERRY, of Baltimore county. I understood that it went there very late, and that it was determined that it should not go through the Senate, the House having amended it and stricken out that portion concerning the relation between master and slave. You offered amendments and spoke against time.

I propose now to take up the scriptural argument, and to pay my respects in that particular to my friend from Prince George's, who sits nearest me (Mr. Berry;) and who yesterday brought that question up by quoting from Genesis to Revelation, saying that in every book of the Bible the institution is recognized.

Mr. BERRY, of Prince George's. Nearly.

Mr. BERRY, of Baltimore county. That is a qualification the gentleman did not make yesterday. We will accept it, however. He quoted Genesis, chapters 16 and 17; Ephesians, chapter 6; Colossians, no particular chapter—taking the whole book, I presume; 1 Timothy, chapter 6; and finally, Philemon first chapter, in relation to Onesimus.

The gentleman speaks of being a religious man; and, in his closing remarks, he urged upon us, you who are engaged in this wild career against the institution in which we are supported by the law and the Gospel, to go to our closets and commune with God, to know whether fanaticism is religion. Now I wish to say in reply, that I have solemnly and seriously done so. I profess to be a religious man, and to have the fear of God before my eyes. Perhaps I may not always succeed, but I do try to do what is right. If I fail it is the fault of the flesh, and not of the heart. After taking these texts of Scripture, and thanking Him for his protection, and asking for His guidance, this text of Scripture came to my view: “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

The point is taken that because slavery existed under both the Old Testament dispensation and in the Gospel times, it must be recognized as a divine institution. But I may say to this statement, as the Saviour did to that of the Jews in regard to writings of divorcement, by which men put away their wives for small causes: “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered these things, but from the beginning of the world it was not so.” (Gen. 1: 26—28.)

The system of service which existed under the patriarchs had probably very little in it